

## MRS. DOWNEY HOPES CHINA WILL FREE SON

From the New York Times

HONG KONG, Aug. 25—Mrs.

Mary V. Downey, the mother of an American imprisoned in Communist China as a spy, returned here today after visiting him and expressed the hope that his sentence would be reduced.

Her son, John, 30 years old, is serving a life sentence on espionage charges. He was arrested in 1954.

Mrs. Downey said she had asked to see the Minister of Justice to request him to review her son's case. The request was not granted but a Chinese Red Cross official reminded her of a previous reply that there was always a possibility of leniency as a result of good behavior.

Mrs. Downey said at a news conference that she had seen her son five times during her two-week stay in Peiping. Each visit was for two hours.

Mrs. Downey, who is from New Britain, Conn., also visited her son in January, 1958. She said she thought he looked better this time and was a "little heavier."

Mrs. Downey said that before meeting her son she had agreed to abide by prison rules, which included a prohibition against discussing his case.

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